

Minutes: Ward 6 NPA Public Meeting, May 2, 2019
Greek Orthodox Church, 600 So. Willard St., Burlington, VT.

Steering Committee present: Matt Grady, Joel Fitzgerald, Michelle Mraz, Mary Riley, Gail Rafferty

Start: 7:00 PM

UVM and Champlain College Updates

Sandy Yusen/Champlain

It's exam week; first week of online semester

Residence halls close at noon on Saturday, 5/4

Senior week is next week; commencement ceremonies at Champlain Valley Expo on 5/11

New, larger venue will allow for more participants and plenty of parking

At 194 St. Paul half of students will stay through the summer

Maintenance projects will take place on Tower Terrace during the summer

On Wed. 5/22 CC Special Collections is holding Grand Estates presentation

Joe Speidel/UVM

Week and a half left for students on campus

Students can leave items no longer wanted at Athletic Campus; items available to public for free

Spring move-out project on 5/23 at 11:00 a.m. on Buell St. and Loomis St.; there are places for people to bring trash and furniture they don't want

Commencement 5/19; speaker is Darren Walker, President of Ford Foundation

New UVM President, Suresh Garimella, arrives 7/1/19; moving into Englesby; has a wife and two children

Neighborhood Project and Student and Community Relations has grants to make improvements in neighborhoods; efforts lead to decrease in crime and police reports
Student and Community Relations doing off-campus-living trainings for students; may expand trainings to other renters

City council discussing recommendations for neighborhood plans—may include restoring rental units to single-family homes

Community Coalition working on clean ups and mediation between renters and landlords

UVM is paying for BTV police patrols in neighborhoods around campus on weekends; seeing 43% decrease in calls for service;

UVM is working to build better relationships between students and neighbors; if problems are persistent, representative from City or UVM will visit student/neighbor for resolution

Housing master plan—looking at need and location for increased housing probably for juniors, seniors and graduate students; UVM houses 62% of its students; surveying students to find out what their needs are

Burlington 2018 Equity Report

Carolyn Felix/City of Burlington

Has worked for city for 7 months in innovation and technology department; worked in international development around the world prior

BTV Stat program—department heads come together and provide their performance metrics every month

In 2018 as part of mayor's state of the city he committed to equity in the city. It's the focus of BTV Stat.

Report asked if departments are offering equitable services. Forced departments to evaluate delivery of services

Parks and Recs saw that 50% of participants are white; 50% non-white; for paid programs only 19% are people of color

Content and process for report:

Defining equity--just and fair inclusion into society in which people can participate, prosper and reach their potential

Structure of report: wanted to provide context; a lot of population data from census included in study; literature review; outreach into community; students provided feedback for report for youth perspective; city drew from multiple agencies/non-profits throughout the city

Report focuses on 5 domains: economic well-being; housing; community and natural resources; education and workforce development and public safety and community health

Hard to choose from lots of information what to include

Demographics of city workforce—only 33% of city leadership is women; city is going to look at how to create more gender balance in the workforce; only 7% of city workers are people of color

Finding census data on just Burlington is difficult because it has a small population

Burlington has a very high number of renters compared to rest of country and a high number of renters are cost burdened

Carolyn will respond to questions or feedback about the report

NPA Online Survey/Resident Feedback

Matt Grady/NPA Steering Committee

Mary Riley suggested a very short email announcement to residents a week before the meeting

Karen Paul suggests moving the date of the meeting towards the end of the month

Matt Grady noted proposed funding increase for NPAs

Karen noted that meetings that offer dinner have better attendance

Joe Speidel says some people say meetings are too long, too frequent, timing of meeting isn't good

Karen offered to provide some of her councilor funding for a Ward 6 dinner gathering

School District Update

Clare Wool/School Commissioner

Notes election of Andrew Styles to BEA presidency. He worked through teachers' union contract and she appreciates his service on behalf of teachers

Andrew Styles/BEA President

BEA and VT NEA and district leadership has set up a mentorship program for new teachers in the district; it's funded and there is scholarship money; very few teachers make it past their 5th year across the country; this will increase retention

A lot of excitement about BHS revisioning

Edmunds Elementary and Middle Schools—new cafeteria and a dedicated gym for elem school

Librarian at Edmunds Middle helped coach kids who won 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in the Hildene Essay Contest

Champlain had a professional development session about teaching Abenaki history

Teacher Aziza Malik at Champlain worked with school garden and healthy eating choices

Food service happy with new kitchen at Edmunds

Edmunds Elem had VT Energy Education Project work with classrooms on renewable energy

Circus Smirkus is doing performance art with PE classes

Clare: in VT teachers can create their own curriculum unlike some other states like TX.

BHS principal is interim for 2 years; interim status will not delay revisioning project

Foreign language classes have been cut at elementary and middle schools; there is a new collaboration with the French Embassy Institute to provide French instruction the school system

Entering last month of school; June 12 is last day of school; BHS graduation is 5/14

Superintendent evaluation underway

Revisioning meeting to gather information regarding new construction including project management selection

Edmunds cafeteria is a work of art

Nurses office and at entrance of Edmunds school together now; big transformations at school

City Council Update

Karen Paul/Ward 6 City Councilor

Budget meetings starting for city departments

Karen is on Parks, Art and Culture committee, happy to be back on committee, which deals with waterfront park and Memorial Auditorium

Karen is also on the Community Development and Neighborhood Revitalization committee which deals with the Neighborhood Project; most important to people close to institutions

Karen recently made a phone call to a home owner on Spruce Street and asked seller not to sell home to someone who would turn it into apartments; shortly after owner sold it to someone who promised to keep it a single-family home

Memorial and Waterfront including Moran—new plan and financing for project must be done by Sept; budget meetings going on at same time; New Moran project is moving forward

Previous ideas for Moran were not viable; now putting money that is available to make a structure we can build upon in the future

Memorial could not be on ballot for town meeting day; there are funds but don't have solid plan yet; need a plan to put it on the ballot

City place: Don Sinex is no longer the face of the project; Brookfield Asset Management majority owner

Personnel from Brookfield say they are on the ground and working every day on the project; this was the first time these representatives appeared before the Council Presentation made by Brookfield rep to Council on Monday

City council did not get monthly updates that were promised; Karen insisted that Brookfield provide regular communication

Reps were not willing to give date on start of construction

Don Sinex was not at Council meeting; Brookfield says they have financing and an executed term sheet is in place

Good news is that the project is financed; despite months of inactivity

Brookfield reported to the Council that they have all the construction documents completed; the project is out to bid;

Karen is disheartened that it took so long for Brookfield to come to a Council meeting.

Karen reached out to Will Voegelé, Senior Vice President of Mixed-Use Development at Brookfield and asked him to regularly communicate on status of the project. She encouraged the NPA invite Mr. Voegelé to an NPA meeting soon.

UVM Medical Center is anchor tenant of City Place; it would be overwhelmingly challenging for the project to proceed without them; Brookfield report that UVMMC is 100% committed to project. Don had gone back and extended contract with UVMMC several months ago

While it was reported to the Council that a certain amount of equity used to get project going, debt financing necessary now

Brookfield was asked at the Council meeting if the project has changed in a way that would require a permit change, and Mr Voegelé said the original plan is still their plan.

End: 9 PM